

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00

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O P 091427Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3007

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 218

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM

CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER

CIA WASHDC

COMSIXTHFLT

COMPHIBRON SIX

COM THREE FOUR MAU

CTF SIX ZERO

CTF SIX ONE

CTF SIX TWO

CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO

FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

DIA WASHDC

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 0578

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION FEBRUARY 8-9

REF: BEIRUT 00536 (DTG 071539Z FEB 77)

1. SUMMARY. UN SECY GEN KURT WALDHEIM VISITED LEB ON FEB 7-8. THE

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PRESS ON FEB 7 PROMINENTLY REPORTED THE OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION OF RICHARD PARKER'S NOMINATION AS AMB TO LEB. KFUR FRONT LEADERS AND FORMER PRIME MIN SAEB SLAAM MET WITH PRES SARKIS. FRANGIE TOLD REPORTERS ON FEB 7 THAT THE ASF HAD ENTERED DAMOUR, THUS PERMITTING CHRISTIANS TO RETURN, AND LEFTIST LEADER KAMAL JUNBLATT DISCUSSED THE ASF DEPLOYMENT IN THE SHUF. ONE ASF OFFICER HAS PREPARED PLANS TO OPEN THE HELICOPTER BASE AT BEIRUT AIRPORT. THE CABINET ON FEB 8

ALLOCATED LL75 MILLION TO THE NATL BANK FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY AND TOURISM. END SUMMARY.

2. WALDHEIM VISITS BEIRUT.

A. UN SECRETARY GEN KURT WALDHEIM VISITED LEB ON FEB 7 AND 8 (SEPTTEL)

HE MET WITH THE PRES, THE SPEAKER OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, THE PRIMIN AND THE MIN OF FON AFFAIRS. WALDHEIM TOLD THE PRESS BEFORE LEAVING FOR AMMAN THAT:

(1) HE HAD DISCUSSED POSSIBLE UN HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO LEB.

(2) THE GOL WISHED A RAPID SOLUTION TO THE MID-EAST CRISIS, BECAUSE SUCH A SOLUTION PROFOUNDLY AFFECTED LEBANON.

(3) THE LEB GOVT WAS READY TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO STABILIZE THE SITUATION IN THE SOUTH.

(4) THE PARTICIPATION OF LEB AT GENEVA DEPENDED "FIRST OF ALL ON THE LEBANESE," BUT ALSO REQUIRED THE AGREEMENT OF THE CONFERENCE CO-CHAIRMEN.

B. AN NAHAR QUOTED AN "UNOFFICIAL SOURCE" AS SAYING LEB LEADERS TOLD WALDHEIM THEY WANTED TO ATTEND THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, PROVIDED IT DID NOT CALL INTO QUESTION LEBANON'S BORDERS WITH ISRAEL. THIS SAME SOURCE ALSO SAID THAT THE LEBANESE WOULD ENDORSE ANY DECISION TAKEN BY SYRIA, EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA ON THE PARTICIPATION OF THE PALESTINIANS AT GENEVA.

3. PRESS REPORTS PARKER'S NOMINATION. ON FEB 8 ALL PAPERS PROMINENTLY REPORTED THE NOMINATION OF RICHARD PARKER AS US AMB TO LEB. THE PRESS ALSO GAVE FRONT PAGE COVERAGE TO "THE SIXTH MEETING IN SEVERAL DAYS" BETWEEN THE US CHARGE AND FONMIN BOUTROS ON THE SOUTH.

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4. KFUR FRONT SEES SARKIS. CHRISTIAN LEADERS SULEIMAN FRANGIE, PIERRE GEMAYEL, FATHER CHARBEL KASSIS, AND DORY CHAMOUN SAW PRES SARKIS ON FEB 8. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, THEY DISCUSSED:

A. REORGANIZATION OF THE LEB ARMY.

B. THE DIVISION OF THE LEB UNIVERSITY INTO SECTIONS FOR EAST AND WEST BEIRUT (WHICH CHRISTIANS SUPPORT AND THE GOL OPPOSES).

C. LEB PARTICIPATION AT THE GENEVA CONF. (WHICH FRANGIE SUPPORTS).

D. THE EMPLOYEES OF AMSHIT RADIO STATION NORTH OF BYBLOS, UNPAID SINCE LAST MAY. (AMSHIT IS CHRISTIAN AND LAST YEAR HIRED EMPLOYEES NOT AUTHORIZED BY THE GOL. THE CHRISTIANS WOULD NOW LIKE TO PUT THESE EMPLOYEES ON THE GOVT PAYROLL. AMSHIT PREVIOUSLY PURSUED ITS OWN POLITICAL LINE, BUT RECENTLY AGREED IN PRINCIPLE, ALTHOUGH NOT ENTIRELY IN FACT, TO CONFORM ITS PROGRAMMING TO THE GOVT'S.)

5. SALAM SEES SARKIS. FORMER PRIMIN SAEB SALAM SAW PRES SARKIS FEB 7. AFTERWARDS SALAM PRAISED THE PRES'S "WIDSOM, HONESTY AND DETERMINATION."

6. DISPLACED PERSONS: CHRISTIANS TO RETURN TO DAMOUR?

A. FORMER PRES FRANGIE TOLD REPORTERS ON FEB 7 THAT THE ASF HAD ENTERED DAMOUR AND THAT THE ORIGINAL (CHRISTIAN) INHABITANTS COULD NOW RETURN TO THEIR HOMES.

B. ALSO ON FEB 7, PRESIDENT SARKIS CALLED IN SAUDI AMB AL-SHAER TO DISCUSS "A MISSION CONNECTED WITH DISPLACED PERSONS," ACCORDING TO ALSHARQ. ASKED BY AN NAHAR IF PALESTINIANS WOULD BE MOVED SOUTH AS A RESULT OF THIS "MISSION," IBRAHIM CHEAITO, MIN OF WATER RESOURCES AND ELECTRICITY, SAID "I THINK THE SOUTH HAS ENOUGH; WE CAN PUT SOME SOMEWHERE ELSE."

7. JUNBLATT DISCUSSES SHUF WITH ASF COMMANDER. LEFTIST LLADER KAMAL JUNBLATT MET ON FEB 8 WITH ASF COMMANDER AHMED AL-HAJJ, AN NAHAR REPORTED, TO DISCUSS THE ASF ACTIVITIES IN THE SHUF. LEB MIL SOURCES SAID THAT THE ASF HAD RECENTLY ARRESTED A NUMBER OF PERSONS AND CONFISCATED VARIOUS WEAPONS AFTER ONE OF ITS PATROLS WAS FIRED ON FROM THE VILLAGE OF QABRI SHMOUL IN THE SHUF ON FEB 6.  
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8. PLANS FOR HELICOPTER BASE. COL GEORGE GHORAYEB, COL AHMED A AL-HAJJ'S DEPUTY ON THE ASF COORDINATING STAFF, HHAS PREPARED PLANS TO REOPEN THE LEB AIR FORCE HELICOPTER BASE AT THE BEIRUT INTL AIRPORT IN THE MUSLIM SUBURB OF KHALDE, ACCORDING TO DATT SOURCES. MOST HELICOPTER PILOTS ARE CHRISTIANS, HOWEVER, AND THERE IS AS YET NO INDICATION THAT THEY ARE PREPARED TO TRAVEL TO KHALDE.

9. GUARANTY FOR DEVELOPMENT BANK. THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MET ON FEB 8. IT DECIDED TO GUARANTEE A LOAN OF LL75 MILLION TO THE NATL BANK FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY AND TOURISM.  
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